



Aruba says “Hasta La Vista” to the Archeological Museum

“Hasta La Vista, Baby” was what many came to say to the exhibition hall of the Archeological Museum of Aruba this past Sunday afternoon in the courtyard of the Instituto di Cultura. The museum closes its exhibition for the next two years to open again in 2008 reincarnated as the Aruba Museum of History, which will be located on the Schelpstraat.

The new home of Aruba’s history will consist of four restored historical building, including the birthplace of Aruba’s WWII hero, “Boy” Ecury and three newly constructed sections that will house the lion’s share of the museum’s vast collection of artifacts.

Those that love the museum and all it represents came to bid it a temporary goodbye, and to meet the staff who will be cataloging and preparing the museum to come. It was also an opportunity for the community to provide their input, to inform curator Arninda Ruiz and staff members what they want from their new museum. Each visitor was handed an evaluation sheet to fill in, and a paper resembling a cloud to state their dream for their new museum and to past on the wall containing all the “wishing clouds.”

There were various fun and educational activities for the children, using materials and techniques that were employed by Aruba’s ancient cultures. Senora Bernadina Growell, “The Mother of Aruban Musical Culture,” spontaneously provided a bit of entertainment and attendees were able to peruse the blueprints of the impressive edifice that will be the Aruba Museum of History.

Margarita Wever, coordinator of programs that will continue over the two years until the exhibition opened stated that the Archeological Museum is far from closed, as there are a number of events and special exhibitions planned over the next two years. Student teachers from the IPA, Jane Maduro and Charlotte Richardson introduced their lesson plan for fourth and fifth graders that teachers can employ in keeping their children connected to the museum during the hiatus.

Aruba’s new museum is a historical project in more ways than one! The renovations of the Ecury Complex are a long desired project by Yvonne Kock of the Monument Restoration Bureau, and the new buildings promise to be state of the art in interactive presentations. The old and the new will combine to provide an exhilarating experience as not only Arubans but island visitors will literally be able to “get in touch” with the island’s past.